Saint Paul Planning Commission City Hall Conference Center 15 Kellogg Boulevard West

Minutes April 29, 2011

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, April 29, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners

Mmes. Halverson, Porter, Reveal, Thao, Wang, and

Present:

Messrs. Fernandez, Gelgelu, Kramer, Nelson, Ochs, Oliver, Spaulding, and Ward.

Commissioners

Mmes. *Merrigan, *Perrus, *Wencl, *Young, and Messrs. *Commers, *Connolly,

and *Schertler.

Absent:

*Excused

Also Present:

Patricia James, Martin Schieckel, Merritt Clapp-Smith, and Sonja Butler,

Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes April 15, 2011.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Ward moved approval of the minutes of April 15, 2011. Commissioner Thao seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

II. Chair's Announcements

Commissioner Kramer chaired the meeting. He stated that he and Chair Commers attended the full funding grant agreement signing ceremony for the Central Corridor LRT project earlier in the week. He noted that Mayor Coleman specifically acknowledged the work of the planning staff and Donna Drummond the Planning Director. Commissioner Kramer stated that we are very well served by the staff we have.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Patricia James reported that the Central Corridor Zoning Ordinance was adopted by the City Council on April 20, 2011. There were a few minor changes, but basically the ordinance was the same as what the Planning Commission recommended. Also there are two items coming before the Council on Wednesday, May 4, 2011. The first one is Ordinance 11-32, amending Chapter 64 of the Zoning Code pertaining to signs. The other is Ordinance 11-46 amending Chapter 74 by designating the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Company Historic District as a Saint Paul Heritage Preservation site.

IV. Zoning Committee

STAFF SITE PLAN REVIEW - List of current applications. (Tom Beach, 651/266-9086)

Two items came before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, April 26, 2011: Riverview Elementary School located at 271 Belvidere, new drive/drop-off lane on vacated Woodbury Street, and Harriet Bishop School located at 540 Warwick, new parking lot and storm water filtration

modifications.

Two items to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, May 3, 2011, are: Chelsea Heights Elementary located at 1557 Huron Street, parking lot mill and overlay, waterproof vault, concrete work, and Cossetta's Italian Market located 211 7th Street West, building addition and parking lot expansion.

NEW BUSINESS

#11-115-463 Teng Scott Vang – Re-establishment of nonconforming use as a duplex. 980 Fuller Avenue, SW corner at Chatsworth. (*Kate Reilly, 651/266-6618*)

Commissioner Gaius Nelson said the Zoning Committee recommends approving the reestablishment of nonconforming use with conditions, which have to do with making sure the property met the building code requirements because it has been vacant for more then a year.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Nelson moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the re-establishment of legal nonconforming use subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

#11-116-461 TNT Fireworks – Conditional Use Permit for seasonal outdoor sales of consumer fireworks. 1440 University Avenue West, NE corner at Pascal and St. Anthony. (Kate Reilly, 651/266-6618)

Commissioner Nelson said the Zoning Committee approved the conditional use permit with conditions that deal with requirements of the state fire marshal and how outdoor fireworks sales can be established by the National Fire Protection Association regulations.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Nelson moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the conditional use permit subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Nelson announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, May 5, 2011.

V. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Commissioner Spaulding announced that the committee had met earlier in the week and discussed the staff report and recommendations on proposed zoning amendments to the use definitions and off-street parking requirements for establishments that serve alcohol. The next meeting is on Tuesday, May 10, 2011.

VI. Neighborhood Planning Committee

<u>Amendment of Redevelopment Plan for Riverfront Redevelopment Project Area</u> – Approve resolution finding the amendment of the project area in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. (*Martin Schieckel*, 651/266-6580)

Commissioner Nelson stated that there is a plan to do an addition and remodeling at Cossetta's on

West 7th near the Xcel Center (the "Project"). They would like to access Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to enable them to do the work. This TIF will come from an Economic Development TIF district, created as part of the "Jobs Bill" legislation. It does not have the same hurdles as other TIF districts, such as having to prove blight. The Project has to provide for at least one additional job, and construction has to start by July 1, 2011, in order to receive funding under the Jobs Bill legislation.

Commissioner Halverson asked why this is not a traditional TIF district and why is it able to qualify for this special State Jobs Bill TIF.

Martin Schieckel, PED staff explained that the Jobs Bill legislation was passed at the State last year. It allowed for the creation of Economic Development TIF Districts that would not normally meet the TIF qualifications, in order to help spur development. In the case of Cossetta's, that project normally would not qualify in terms of blight or other determining factors. But as an example of trying to spur development it does work under the jobs bill. The money still has to be spent only on TIF eligible items.

Commissioner Reveal asked if there are any other areas where this type of TIF district has been created under the Jobs Bill legislation, or is this the exception so far.

Mr. Schieckel said that there are several projects being done under the Jobs Bill legislation. They were part of the legislation that allows for the use of pooled TIF dollars where they otherwise would not have been able to be used. This is the only example that Schieckel is aware of where the City has actually utilized the Jobs Bill provision that allows for the creation of a new TIF district. The TIF dollars that Cossetta's will be using will be generated from the tax increment that the project itself creates.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Nelson moved the Neighborhood Planning Committee's recommendation to approve the resolution finding the amendment of the project area in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. The motion carried 12-1 (Halverson) on a voice vote.

Commissioner Nelson noted that there was some discussion that it might be worth while for the Planning Commission to get a TIF 101 lesson in order to help understand the implications if the TIF districts and how the Planning Commission fits into that process for creating districts in order to create development. He also announced the items on the agenda for the next Neighborhood Planning Committee's meeting on Wednesday, May 4, 2011.

VII. <u>Ford Plant Update</u> – Informational presentation by Merritt Clapp-Smith, PED staff. (Merritt Clapp-Smith, 651/266-6547)

Merritt Clapp-Smith, PED staff gave a power point presentation with background and updates on the Ford project work that began in 2007 after news of the Ford plant closure, originally planned for Fall 2008. Since then the closure date has been extended twice, and is now slated for late 2011. Starting in 2007, the Planning Commission initiated Phase I planning work with a consultant team and the Ford Site Planning Task Force. Five alternative development scenarios for the site were created to represent the widest range of potential land use redevelopment. Each scenario showed different types of uses and infrastructure layouts.

In the Phase II planning for the site, which began in late 2008, the five scenarios have been used to

analyze and compare different land use and infrastructure options for the site. There has been a fiscal impact analysis, a green manufacturing reuse analysis, an examination of sustainable redevelopment potential, and soon an AUAR (Alternative Urban Areawide Review) will be conducted, in addition to the ongoing environmental assessment of potential contamination at the site being conducted by Ford.

The Fiscal Impact Analysis estimated annual net fiscal impact from each scenario and found that it did not vary widely from one to the other. The estimates also seemed lower than what one might intuitively expect for economic benefits from redevelopment of the property. However, fiscal impacts are very difficult to estimate and the model only accounted for estimated service costs for the site versus potential tax base, so other elements of potential economic benefit like local employment or employee spending in the area were not considered.

A Green Manufacturing Study was also done. Based on this report, the conclusion was that the site has modest potential for manufacturing reuse, but subsidies will likely be needed to secure a new tenant, given the competitiveness of the national market in attracting new manufacturing uses.

Recently, the City has been examining how to bring sustainability to redevelopment of the site. This is a top priority for redevelopment of the site regardless of land use. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency provided grants to the City of Saint Paul to work with consultants who are professionals in green design to look at sustainable stormwater design for the site, and more broadly at all elements of sustainable redevelopment, including energy, waste systems, and transportation. The two sustainable redevelopment reports will be presented to the Ford Site Planning Task Force on Monday, May 2, 2011. The first of these reports is the Stormwater Feasibility report, by Barr Engineering. The second report is Roadmap to Sustainability for the Ford site, the purpose of the report to set a bold agenda for sustainable redevelopment of the site, by determining categories and thresholds for green design.

Environmental Assessment of the property is still being conducted. Ford is participating in the State of Minnesota's Voluntary Investigation and Clean up Program. Phase I is complete and they are in the middle of Phase II.

Later this year, the AUAR (Alternative Urban Areawide Review) will begin. An AUAR is like an EIS, but is conducted on multiple proposals for the same site. The study, which will take about a year, will be paid for by Ford and the City will assist in managing the consultant team.

The plant is scheduled to close in the third-quarter of this year, but an exact date has not been determined. In 2012, Ford will list the site for sale and select a Master Developer. After the AUAR is complete, it and all of the other analyses conducted will be considered by the Ford Task Force and City staff in helping them determine a land use redevelopment framework, possible rezonings and Comprehensive Plan amendments to recommend to the Planning Commission, which will in turn forward recommendations to the City Council for final adoption. Ms. Clapp-Smith concluded her presentation.

Commissioner Ward asked about some of the timelines that Ford has with closing, moving and listing with the master developer. Is there a period of time during which they will do this, do they anticipate absorption of this parcel to take a certain amount of time, and have they had ongoing conversations with developers. He thinks that they would have to engage several different players prior to the sale and make them aware of the City's studies and interests.

Ms. Clapp-Smith said that the City has been communicating with Ford Land, the Real Estate Division at Ford. She said that it is very experienced in land disposition, with almost a dozen other sites nationally that are moving from production to closure.

Commissioner Ward said that with the importance of this major redevelopment and the potential of it being a national model for brownfield redevelopment, there should be strong community engagement. He asked if there were plans for such engagement beyond other than the Ford Task Force already in place.

Ms. Clapp-Smith said that there was no specific, alternative plan for engaging the community and stakeholders as the site moves towards redevelopment, but acknowledged that this engagement is essential and should be done thoughtfully.

Commissioner Oliver asked what is going to happen with the rail spur.

Ms. Clapp-Smith said that there are no specific plans for the rail spur at this time, which could be reused in a variety of ways, as a rail, road, trail or other option. Decisions about its ultimate reuse will depend largely on the type of site redevelopment that occurs and how the rail line might best fit with and support it. This will be one of the most important project decisions that lie ahead.

Commissioner Spaulding asked for understanding of the Task Force that has come up with the five scenarios for the AUAR; he does not recall whether their intent was to retain them in any further capacity and if not, how will a formal master plan for the site be identified.

Ms. Clapp-Smith said that City staff and policy makers must evaluate potential approaches for determining the site's ultimate infrastructure and zoning, and the role of the community in that public/private dialog. Ford appreciates the existing Task Force as being a pulse on the community and they want to get the master developer to start interacting with the community process as well.

Commissioner Halverson stated that we are losing a plant with good paying jobs and in these plans how many are going to attract similar employment opportunities for people in the neighborhood.

Ms. Clapp-Smith said the Green Manufacturing Report was an attempt to identify the potential of manufacturing reuse at the site. Mayor Coleman has said that bringing back high quality jobs back to the site is one of the priorities is one of the priorities of site redevelopment.

Commissioner Porter suggest that they create a Community Benefit Agreement for this project and asked if there had been any thought about that.

Ms. Clapp-Smith stated that they have not talked about it, but it would be interesting to. She was not certain if Community Benefit Agreements have been used for sites of this size before, as they tend to typically be applied on single projects.

Commissioner Nelson asked for information regarding the Ford meeting on Monday.

Ms. Clapp-Smith said that the Ford Site Planning Task Force will be meeting on Monday, May 2nd at Macalester College, the Olin-Rice Building in Room 250.

VIII. Transportation Committee

Commissioner Spaulding announced the items on the agenda for the next Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, May 2, 2011.

IX. Communications Committee

Commissioner Thao has no report.

X. Task Force Reports

None.

XI. Old Business

None.

XII. New Business

None.

XIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Recorded and prepared by Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary Planning and Economic Development Department, City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Drummond

Planning Director

Approved

(Date)

Anthony Fernandez

Secretary of the Planning Commission

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